

## 20. Changing the world: Not my responsibility. Or is it? Part 1

### INTRODUCTION

Explain to the children that some people believe they can change the world for the better in the future. Ask, 'I wonder if we could?' and take answers from the children.

Tell the children that in the year 2000 World Leaders committed to the 'Millennium Development Goals'. They wanted to help more children go to school, to reduce HIV infection, to ensure more people got clean drinking water, and to reduce extreme poverty in the world. Ask, 'I wonder how well they did?' and take answers from the children.

Show pupils this video about the Millennium and Global Goals: <https://vimeo.com/138848993> and ask, 'If you could think of three extraordinary things to change in the world over the next 15 years, what would you pick and why?'

Remind the children that the world leaders committed themselves to:

- end extreme poverty;
- fight inequality and injustice; and
- fix climate change.

They also said that if every school in the world teaches children about these goals, they will be some way to becoming the generation that changed the world.

Ask the children: 'Do you agree that children can change the world?' and listen to their answers. Tell them about Malala Yousafzai, who defied the Taliban in Pakistan and demanded that girls be allowed to receive an education:  
<http://www.biography.com/people/malala-yousafzai-21362253>

### ACTIVITY

Tell the children that in the year 2015 World Leaders committed to the 'Global Goals for Sustainable Development'. There were 17 goals to achieve three extraordinary things in the next 15 years. If you have video access, show children the video of the world's largest lesson:  
<https://vimeo.com/138852758>

Make a set of cards of the 17 Global Goals for Sustainable Development:

<http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/> (or see image below).

You'll see the 'headline' goals on this page – make cards just using these images. [If you click on each 'card' you'll see more detailed ideas.]

Divide the children into small groups and give them a few cards each. Ask them in their groups to:

- think of as many *specific actions* as you can that would help improve life for the world's people in relation to the topics on your cards, and write them on Sticky Notes, e.g., for No. 1 'No poverty' – they might put, 'Provide food, water and shelter for people who are victims of natural disasters'. For further ideas see the list below;
- share their ideas with a neighbouring group;
- make a display of the Global Goals for Sustainable Development, with their Sticky Notes around each one.

Here is a list of specific actions people could take in their everyday life to work towards some of the Global Goals:

- Shop local. Supporting neighbourhood businesses keeps people employed and helps prevent trucks from driving far distances.
- Shop Smart—plan meals, use shopping lists and avoid impulse buys. Don't succumb to marketing tricks that lead you to buy more food than you need, particularly for perishable items. Though these may be less expensive per gram, they can be more expensive overall if much of that food is discarded.
- Buy Funny Fruit—many fruits and vegetables are thrown out because their size, shape or colour are not 'right'. Buying these perfectly good funny fruit, at the farmer's market or elsewhere, utilizes food that might otherwise go to waste.
- When you go to a restaurant and are ordering seafood always ask: "Do you serve sustainable seafood?" Let your favourite businesses know that ocean-friendly seafood's on your shopping list.
- Bike, walk or take public transport. Only use the car if there is no realistic alternative.
- Use a refillable water bottle and coffee cup to cut down on waste.
- Take fewer napkins. You don't need a handful of napkins to eat your takeaway. Take just what you need.
- Shop vintage or second hand. It reuses what others have

- finished with and the money may also go to help others.
- Encourage your parents to buy an electric car – fewer fumes to pollute the environment.
- Donate what you don't use. Charity shops will give your old goods a new lease of life!
- Take vaccines when you are offered them to protect yourself and others.
- Take advantage of your right to vote in school elections and have your say about your local community.

## CONCLUSION

Explain that there is a lot of support from religious and non-religious people for the Global Goals. For example, the Muslim faith teaches, "The Earth is green and beautiful, and Allah has appointed you his stewards over it. The whole earth has been created a place of worship, pure and clean" (Hadith).

Non-religious people also support the Goals, not because the world belongs to God, but in simple recognition that all creatures depend upon the world for survival. Because we are all alive, we should have full and equal rights to enjoy the world – it's only fair. Some people, including some religious people, extend these rights to animals, or further, to all beings.

Ask the children to talk to a partner about the three main goals of ending extreme poverty, fighting injustice and inequality and fixing climate change. Do they think these are just for human beings or for all other living beings too?

Tell the children that in the next session we will continue to think about the environment and steps people could take to improve their surrounding environment.

